
Mystery surrounding missing state vehicles deepens

CAROLINE BOATENG & SETH J. BOKPE / 10 FEBRUARY 2017



Administrator-General of the Presidential Estates Unit, Mr David Yaro

Get Notifications

The Office of the Administrator-General of the Presidential Estates Unit (PEU) has underscored the need for the Presidency to exercise due diligence in efforts to find the more than 200 vehicles reported missing from the fleet of cars at the Presidency.

In an interview with the Daily Graphic, the Administrator-General, Mr David Yaro, said the reporting format for taking stock of government vehicles, contained in the handover notes, was thorough enough to help find the missing vehicles.



EMAIL



FACEBOOK



TWITTER



GOOGLE+



Justifying the need for a task force to retrieve state assets on a radio programme last Wednesday, the acting Director of Communications at the Presidency, Mr Eugene Arhin, said about 200 state vehicles were missing, a situation which had compelled the President to use his own vehicle for official duties.

However, Mr Yaro proposed a more careful analysis of the notes to find the vehicles.

Vehicles

For instance, Mr Yaro said from the notes, the Office of the President, made up of State Protocol, General Administration and VVIP, reported a total vehicle holding of 678.

Out of the number, State Protocol had 67 vehicles, General Administration, 41, and VVIP, 570.

With respect to the alleged missing vehicles, he told Joy FM that unless vehicles had not been declared in the handover notes, all the vehicles were accounted for when he handed over details of the Presidency to the Transition Team.

He said the officials to be held responsible if, indeed, more than 200 vehicles went missing, were the former Chief of Staff, Mr Julius Debrah, and the Chief Director at the Presidency.

Due diligence

Mr Yaro said there could be instances when an official had left the posting or was not in the jurisdiction, hence had been unable to return the vehicle in his or her possession.

He said from the notes, some vehicles were in the names of officials such as the former Greater Accra Regional Minister, Nii Laryea Afotey Agbo, and a former Minister of the Central Region, Mr E. K. T. Addo.

He said with specific names pegged to vehicles, it was easy to trace them.

Directive

The Office of the Administrator-General, which is understaffed and under resourced, facilitated the drafting of handover notes for the transition and thereby took stock of some government assets for its database.

During processes by the office in preparation for the transition last year, ministries, municipalities, metropolitan authorities, district assemblies, agencies and independent organisations were impressed upon to ensure that vehicles were returned to the new government as soon as it assumed office.

Baseless and false?

Meanwhile, a former Deputy Chief of Staff, Mr Johnny Osei, has accused the government of distorting facts about the alleged missing vehicles in a statement issued yesterday in response to the claims.

He said claims by the acting Director of Communications at the Presidency that more than 200 vehicles were missing were false, baseless and without merit and represented a continuation of the distortions and bad faith that had characterised the conduct of the NPP side of the Transition Team.

He stated that as part of the transition process, the Assets and Logistics Committee on the NPP side was given a detailed list of all 641 vehicles in the pool at the Presidency.

Interestingly, there is a difference of more than 30 vehicles between what the Administrator-General and the former Deputy Chief of Staff presented on the vehicles list.

“It is befuddling that several weeks after the NPP administration began this campaign of disinformation and harassment of members of the immediate past government, it has as yet failed to put out an iota of evidence to back these claims.

“If the NPP government was sincere about these claims, it would have published a full list of all allegedly missing vehicles and provide specific information on each of them,” it said.



Mr Johnny Osei, Mr Eugene Arhin

President's cars

He also dismissed allegations that President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo had been left without official vehicles and was using his personal vehicles for official duties.

“It must be placed on record that the use of the BMWs and his personal vehicle, if it is true, is not due to the non-availability of presidential vehicles. It is clearly a choice that he made on his own accord. Among the vehicles handed over to the NPP team were two bulletproof saloon cars and two bulletproof cross-country vehicles specifically dedicated to the use of the President.

“Both sets of bulletproof vehicles are relatively new and in good condition for the transportation of the President. Added to this is a fleet of almost new Mercedes Benz vehicles. Surely if President Akufo-Addo can use 10-year-old vehicles, he should be able to use vehicles that are relatively new and in good condition.

“The attempt, therefore, by Eugene Arhin to create the impression of scarcity and use same as a pretext to justify the unwarranted falsehood about missing vehicles belonging to the Presidency is disingenuous and unbecoming of a public official whose actions must be guided

by integrity and candour,” it said.

Amended

The recently passed Presidential Transition Act 2016 which has not received presidential assent and which has not also been gazetted prescribes a three-month period from the time of the inauguration of the new government for the return of state bungalows by previous government officials to the current.

The bill gives the Administrator-General the power to evict former government officials if they do not vacate the bungalows.

However, because the amended act has not been assented to or gazetted, it remains an ineffective law and the Administrator General cannot act under it.

Context

In November 2016, the Administrator-General reported that information on 18,000 state vehicles in ministries, municipalities, metropolitan authorities, district assemblies, agencies and independent organisations had been collated.

A planning officer with the Office of the Administrator-General, Mr Walter Adabere Akitame, explained then that the office, in facilitating the drafting of the handover notes, had furnished chief directors with a template for the collection of information on vehicles.

Information had been collected on the model of vehicles, their make, chassis numbers, the year of purchase and registration numbers.

Information had also been collected on the persons using the vehicles and the state of a vehicle which was classified as serviceable, unserviceable, auctioned or lost.

That, Mr Akitame explained, was to keep track of the vehicles and help in tracing them.

Tweet



Like 122

Share 122

Get Notifications



